

**Muhaddithah Razia Apa bint Haji
Ahmad**

نور الله مرقدھا

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**07 Rabiuth Thaani 1363 (01/04/1944) –
Saturday 22 Muharram 1436 (15/11/2014)**

Her father Haji Ahmad رحمه الله عليه was the Ameer of Tabligi Jam'aat of Malegaon. Tabligi Jamaa'at works initiated in Malegaon and nearby villages through his efforts and those of his fellow associates. He remained the Ameer until his demise in 1983.

The youngest of 12 siblings, Razia Apa was a healthy normal child until the age of 7. She had a head injury after a fall whilst playing with friends at the local maktab in Anjuman school which she attended in the evenings for her Qur'aan lessons. This injury resulted in symptoms similar to those of stroke and thus initially she was treated for stroke. However, despite continuous treatment, she never fully recovered and her head injuries left her weak and fragile for life.

Despite her ill health and weakness, she continued with her education and completed her 7th grade in school and basic Deeni knowledge in Maktab.

Thereafter, she remained at home and even though she reached a marriageable age, due to her weakness was not capable of being married and thus she remained unmarried. However, during this time, she busied herself by attending any religious gathering for females to quench her Deeni thirst and by teaching Qur'aan to the local children of the neighbourhood. She also helped around the

house sometimes cooking and spinning yarn (for cloth weaving) to the best of her ability.

In 1968 Madrasa Jameatus Swalehat was founded by Hadhrat Moulana Uthmaan رحمه الله عليه and his companions Moulana Abdul Haqq, Moulana Ilyas & Moulana Ayyub رحمه الله عليهم. This was the first institute of its kind in India at the time for females to gain religious education in the Arabic Language.

For two years, classes were held in the local Malle ki Masjid before transferring to its current premises in 1970.

Razia Apa enrolled as a student with the very first class and graduated top of the class in 1973 within this first class of 21 Aalimaat.

Due to her weakness, her Kitaabs were carried by an aide to and from the madrasah.

As this was the first class of female scholars, whilst they were still students, they were given the responsibility of teaching kitaabs to the lower year groups from their final 3rd year of study onwards. They began their teaching profession under the direct supervision of Hadhrat Moulana Uthmaan رحمه الله عليه. They were both students and teachers.

Immediately after graduating in 1973, as Razia Apa and her colleagues had already become proficient in teaching, Razia Apa was chosen to teach Bukhari Jild Awwal and Tirmidhi Jild Awwal. Some years later, she started teaching Shamaa'il Tirmidhi too. From there onwards, she had the opportunity to teach Hadith till her demise ie. just over 40 years.

In 1973 – News of Hadhrat Shaykh رحمه الله عليه migrating to Madinah spread like wildfire, thus her father took Razia Apa to Bombay for the purpose of bay'at upon his hands. She performed bay'at upon his hands. She performed all her ma'mulaat despite her disabilities to the best of her ability.

Until 1973, Jameatus Swalehat remained a day madrasah, whereby local girls enrolled and graduated as Aalimahs after 5 years of study.

When news spread about the madrasah, the demand for boarding facilities arose for those females who wished to enrol from outside of Malegaon, and thus Hadhrat Moulana Uthmaan رحمه الله عليه and his companions decided to initiate boarding and the construction of Darul Iqaamah started in 1973, completed in 1976 (1394AH).

With Darul Iqaamah under construction and the first boarding students arriving in 1973, the need arose for a fulltime headteacher / boarding supervisor.

Hadhrat Moulana Uthmaan رحمه الله عليه approached respected Haji Ahmad رحمه الله عليه and requested that Razia Apa take up this khidmat. Razia Apa's father replied, "Take her, I have dedicated her for Deen for the rest of her life."

From that day onwards, she started to board.

Even though only Razia Apa and Khala Jaan resided as supervisor in the hostel, her awe was so great that if she stepped out of her room into the corridor, complete silence would pursue.

During this period, her habit remained to visit her parents and relatives every Friday without fail.

Friday has always been special and anyone who is familiar with Malegaon will know that on a Friday, not only was it a holiday in the madrasah but also in the entire city. The noisy power-looms silent, sound of Azaan rising from every minaret, everyone; young and old, male and female bathed, poor and rich adorned in their best of clothes, relatives gathered and the best of dishes Pilaaw cooked; Eid it was for sure of which memories can never be erased.

Razia Apa was very diligent about Fridays and thus bathed, adorned her best, busied herself in extra Ibaadaat and after Jumuah, sometimes on foot and usually by rickshaw went to her parents to meet up with relatives, returning back usually after Isha salaah.

Ramadhann 1988- Performed her first Umrah.

1989 – At the request of Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf Motala دامت برکاتہم the management of Jameatus Swalehat granted her leave for one academic year to teach Bukhari Shareef & Tirmidhi Shareef in Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiyah Kidderminster (the first girls' madrasah of Europe) to the first class of 4 students.

She resided for a year and during this period also performed Hajj.

1990 – The first ever Khatme Bukhari Jalsa for females was held at Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiyah Kidderminster wherein Razia Apa completed Bukhari Shareef.

1990 – Razia apa left for Malegaon via Saudi Arabia where she performed Umrah.

During her stay in the UK, she visited many towns and cities giving lectures and bayaans benefitting hundreds of females.

1991– Razia Apa underwent major spinal surgery which resulted in her losing whatever strength she had rendering her fully disabled and wheelchair bound. She remained thus for the remaining 23 years of her life. She was dependent upon others to the degree that even to turn on to her side, to lift a morsel of food to her mouth, to perform tayammum she required aid.

Razia Apa remained in Poona after the operation for a few years. During this time, she continued giving bayaans and Darse Hadith in different places despite her disability.

In 1997 - She transferred to Madrasah Banatus Salehat, Lohara for a year and again despite her disability, continued teaching Hadith.

In 1998 - She transferred to Jogwad and again despite her disability, continued teaching Bukhari & Shamaa'il Tirmidhi at Madrasah Aisha Siddiqah for 4 years.

Finally in 2002 – She transferred to Hyderabad and again despite her disability, continued teaching Bukhari & Shamaa'il Tirmidhi at Madrasah Riyadhul Banaat till 2014.

In February 2014 – She undertook a visit of 3 weeks to Zambia at their request, gave darse Mishkaat & Bukhari quenching the spiritual thirst of many and returned to Hyderabad.

After her trip to Zambia, her health started to deteriorate; however she was still able to continue with her dars of Hadith once a week in Madrasah Riyadhul Banaat.

Her last dars of Khatme Bukhari took place in Madrasah Riyadhul Banaat in June 2014. She gave a 45 minute speech on the Sunnah of drinking water.

After Ramadhan, due to ill health, she was unable to continue with her teaching. Her health deteriorated affecting her lungs, kidneys and digestive system. Despite treatment, she deteriorated further and in the final week took a turn for the worse. She was admitted to hospital on the morning of Friday 14th November 2014.

Zakiya bint Yusuf (a student of hers) says that she remained with Razia Apa from after Asr till 11pm. During that time, Apa was conscious, however at times would not be conscious. At times, one could hear from her faintly **يا سلام** and **لا اله الا الله**.

Throughout the night she deteriorated further.

Another student by the name of Asmaa reports that in the morning, I started to recite Yaasin loudly and when I reached towards the end of the Surah, I sensed her breathing her last and at 6.30am Razia Apa left this temporary abode of difficulties to meet the Almighty.

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

Her body was transferred to her home town Malegaon. Her classmate Tahira Apa Thawban and students Amina Apa Israa'eel, Sabiha Apa bint Ml Muhammad Ilyas & Waahida Apa participated in her ghusl. Her salaatul Janazah took place on Sunday morning at 11am which was led by the eminent jurist and scholar; the general secretary of Islami Fiqh Academy, India Hadhrat Moulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani of Hyderabad. She was laid to rest next to her two sisters.

Distinct Qualities

- Despite spending her entire life dependent upon others, she dedicated her life to khidmate Deen & Hadith per her father's wishes, and although numerous requests were made

by her family towards the end of her life to relocate to her family home she declined.

- Apa was fragile and delicate, uttered only where required.
- Her spiritual strength overpowered her physical strength to such a degree that if one did not know of her physical health, it would not even cross one's mind for even a moment when listening to her dars that she was merely a frail bag of bones. Whilst teaching, she would be engrossed to such a degree as if she had no ailment whatsoever.
- Her bayaans and lessons of Ahaadith became famous nationwide and due to demand, she travelled far & wide to quench the thirst of female seekers of knowledge.
- Her lessons of Hadith could be compared to those given by scholars of Hadith in great universities full of knowledgeable phrases.
- Her way was that of the Sunnah. Biographies and writings of our pious predecessors would be her read especially those of her Shaykh Hadhrat Shaykhul Hadeeth نور الله مرقدہ
- She was very patient. Never would there be a word of complaint, whinge or moan on her lips despite her sufferings.
- Moulana Uthmaan رحمه الله عليه used to say, "Whosoever wishes to see a Jannati woman, see Razia Apa."
- Till late night, she remained awake busy in Mutala'aa for teaching Hadith the next day. Before Darul Iqaamah, this

used to take place in her father's room with an oil lamp lit & the kitab in front of her on a stool (which still exists in her family home). Holding the kitab with the aid of her fingers led to indents within them.

- Despite being the youngest and most beloved, her utmost awe and respect for her father was to the degree that in his presence, there would be no more than the exchange of a few words when questioned, otherwise mere salaam and duas.
- Her family say that at times, she would have knowledge of events without any apparent means & her dreams always came true, at times she would forewarn members of family regarding their actions due to dreams eg. She sent a message to a close female relative warning her against wearing tight and short sleeved clothes.
- She was living testament to the Hadith *نَضَرَ اللَّهُ وَجْهَ امْرِئٍ سَمِيعٍ* ... her radiant face bore no wrinkles despite her age, and anyone whoever has had the opportunity to meet her will testify of her beautiful radiant face adorned with the prominent effect of Sajdah on her forehead which neither age nor illness & disability could disfigure till the end. Those who attended her funeral say that her beauty and radiance was multiplied. She remained more beautiful and radiant than a bride in her life and in her death.
- Although childless, she illuminated the world with hundreds and thousands of lights bearing the Deen which are now engaged in imparting Deen around the globe.

*"That one torch that we lit some time ago
From the same torch the world took light"*

Note: Information in this article was contributed by Razia Apa's immediately family, those in her service, teachers and graduates of Jameatus Swalehat. Allah reward them immensely in both worlds with the best. Ameen.

Zebunnisa
28 Muharram 1436

(Insha Allah, there is intention to publish lectures of Hadith given by Razia Apa نور الله مرقدھا. If anyone can assist by supplying with recordings, please forward. Allah reward you immensely in both worlds with the best. Ameen.)